

Indentured labor in the age of imperialism, 1834–1922

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1

Beginnings

In the summer of 1870 Mohamed Sheriff was buying flowers for the table in the bazaar in Lucknow, the capital of Oudh, a state that had been forcibly annexed to British India in 1856. Like many other upper-caste brahmans (priests) and *kshatriyas* (warriors) of Oudh, Sheriff had found employment in the Indian army, in his case as a servant to a British officer in the 13th Native Infantry. Whether because his officer had left India or for other reasons, Sheriff had left his employ, so that when a man approached him in the bazaar to ask if he was looking for work, Sheriff answered "yes." The man told him there was plenty of work in the sugar plantations of Demerara, and Sheriff agreed to go.

The man in the market was the local agent of a labor recruiter, the final link in a chain that extended back to the sugar growers of Demerara in British Guiana on the Caribbean coast of South America. Along with nine others recruited from Lucknow on this occasion, Sheriff was escorted to Calcutta, probably traveling the major portion of the distance on the railway completed just four years earlier. On 25 August 1870, five days after arriving in Calcutta, he boarded on the *Medea*, a large 1,066-ton vessel chartered to carry indentured migrants from Calcutta to British Guiana at the rate of twelve pounds a head. With Sheriff were 446 other Indian recruits, mostly younger males, but including 91 women, 31 children, and 21 infants. During their eighty-seven-day voyage through the Indian Ocean, around southern Africa, and across the Atlantic, five more infants were born. Six persons died during the voyage – a much lower death rate than a few years earlier.

Described as "intelligent looking" and able to speak English, Sheriff had served as a *sirdar* (headman) for the other immigrants in their dealings with the ship's officers. For this he expected to receive a payment of \$3, but by the end of the voyage he had abandoned hope of receiving a \$19 bonus the Indian recruiter had promised him in Lucknow. Nor, he told British investigators who met the ship in Guiana, had he received from the

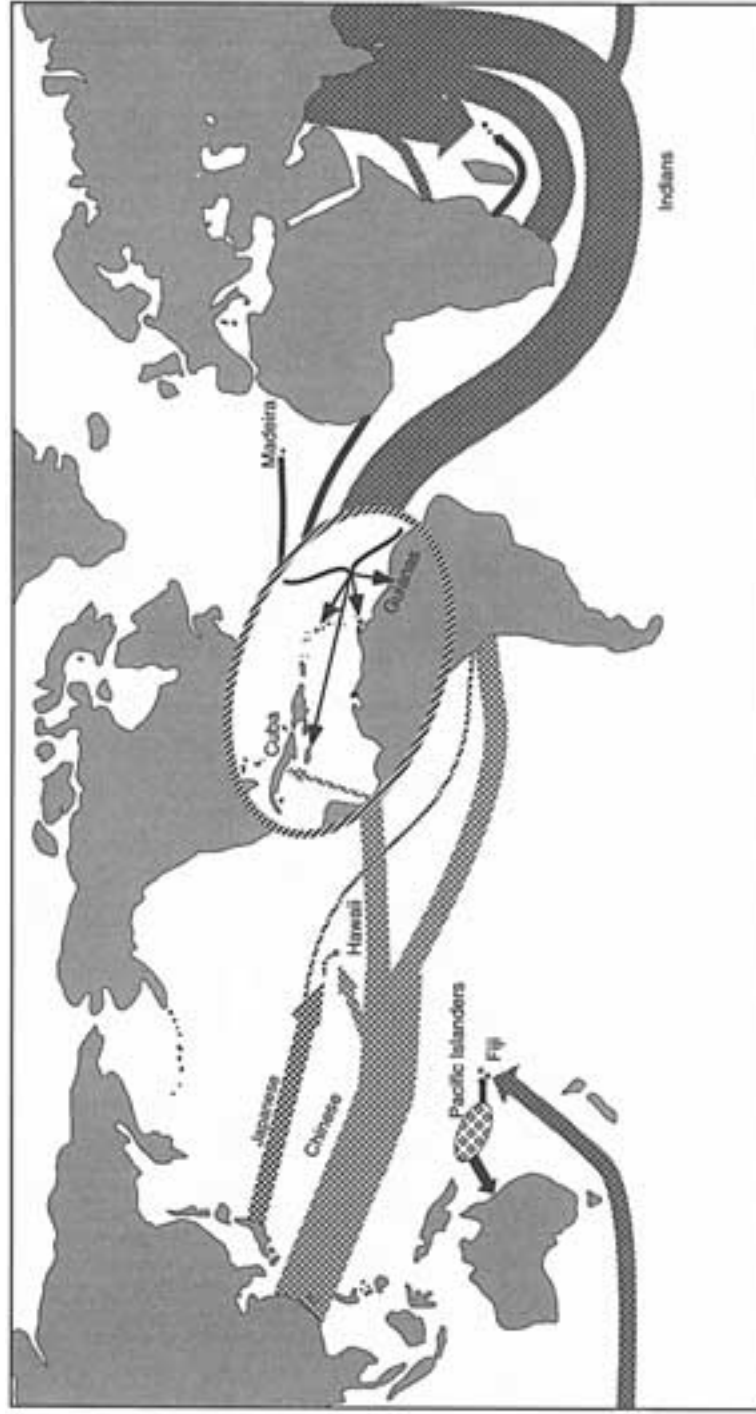
officials who examined him in Calcutta the required copy of the indentured contract into which he had entered by accepting free passage to Guiana. That he received the salary of "ten annas to two rupees a day" he had been promised by the recruiter when he got to Moor Farm, a plantation whose owner purchased his indenture, is also doubtful. According to the investigators, wages for able-bodied Indian males on sugar plantations in British Guiana in 1870 were about 28 cents a day, not quite 10 annas and far less than two rupees (32 annas).

The physical adjustments to the arduous and unfamiliar life of the sugar plantation would not have been easy for Sheriff, who was not a farmer, a characteristic he shared with many of his fellow recruits from Lucknow, whom he described as "not all cultivators – some barbers, coachmen, porters, and other followings." Still, Sheriff's psychological adjustment to his new surroundings may have been easier than that of his companions, since he had traveled abroad before, having accompanied the 14th Regiment during the British invasion of Ethiopia in 1868. No known records trace his life as an indentured laborer. Nor is it known if he stayed on in British Guiana (as most Indians did) or if he ever returned to India.

While no single example can hope to capture the enormous range of individual indentured experiences, in their broad outlines those of Mohamed Sheriff had much in common with those of tens of thousands of other migrants¹ who left their homes between 1834 and 1914 under indentured contracts to labor in lands far from home. He is exceptional largely in that his name and some of his life story have survived in historical records. The lives of most others can be imagined only through anonymous statistics. Along with the *Medea*, fifteen other chartered ships left Calcutta for British Guiana during the 1869–70 season, carrying a total of 6,685 passengers. At the time of his arrival there were 52,598 recent migrants in British Guiana, mostly Indians, over 70 percent males, more than three-quarters still under indenture. That same season eight ships landed 3,811 additional Indians from Calcutta in the British West Indian colonies of Jamaica and Trinidad.² In 1870 thirteen vessels carried 4,076

¹To avoid cumbersome and confusing switches in point of view, this study refers to inter-continental travelers as migrants rather than immigrants and emigrants. It also often follows the common historical convention of using "nineteenth century" to refer to the historical era from 1815–1914, rather than to just the years 1801–1900.

²Sheriff's interview and the calculation of prevailing wage rates are in the 1871 Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Enquire into the Treatment of Immigrants into British Guiana, in Great Britain, *Parliamentary Papers* (hereafter *PP*) 1871 xx [c. 393], pp. 59–60, 97. Details of the voyage and other immigrants may be found in the 1871 General Report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commission (CLEC), pp. 7–10 and appendix 16; *PP* 1871 xx (369). For Indian railroads, see Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress: Technology Transfer in the Age of Imperialism, 1850–1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 65. Sheriff may well have journeyed up from Bombay on the even newer rail line that was completed to Allahabad in 1870.



Map 1. Principal overseas indentured migrations, 1834–1919 (routes approximate).

indentured Indians to the British colony of Mauritius, one of the Mascarene islands of the Indian Ocean. Indians were also migrating under indenture by that time to Southeast Asia and to French colonies in the West Indies, but indenture was not a uniquely Indian experience. That same year (1870) 12,383 Chinese indentured laborers set sail for Peru and 1,312 for Cuba; 305 Chinese arrived in Hawaii, and a few Pacific islanders were recruited to Queensland, Australia.³ Indentured migration from Africa had just ended; the first experiment in such recruitment from Japan had taken place in 1868 and would be resumed on a larger scale in 1885.

Indentured labor, slavery, and free migration

Though he may not have received a copy of its terms, Mohamed Sheriff was aware that he had signed a contract of indenture. The particular contract he signed, stricter than those affecting migrants from India to British Guiana before 1862, bound him to five years of service for which-ever employer purchased it and then to a second five-year contract to complete his "industrial residence" in the colony.⁴ At that point he was entitled to free passage home, but many accepted a cash "bounty" for signing a new labor contract instead.

Although such serial indentured contracts were a novel feature of the later nineteenth century, indenture had a long history in British colonies in the Americas. More than half of all European migrants to British colonies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are estimated to have been indentured, including three-quarters of those to seventeenth-century Virginia. Impoverished British, Irish, Scottish, and German migrants accepted the conditions of indentured "servitude" in order to begin a better life in the New World colonies. A trickle continued to arrive until shortly before the new, largely Asian, indentured migrants began to arrive in the 1830s.⁵

These new indentured migrants differed from their European predecessors in more ways than their origins. Indentured Asians, Africans, and Pacific islanders of the nineteenth century went to a wider variety of destinations in the Americas, as well as to islands in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, to Australia, and to parts of East and southern Africa, making theirs more global than the European migrations across the North Atlantic.

³Colonial Blue Book of Mauritius, 1871; Arnold J. Meagher, "The Introduction of Chinese Laborers to Latin America: The 'Coolie Trade,' 1847-1874" (Ph.D. dissertation, History, University of California, Davis, 1975), tables 13-14; Katharine Coman, *The History of Contract Labor in the Hawaiian Islands* (New York: Arno Press, 1978), p. 63.

⁴Alan H. Adamson, *Sugar without Slaves: The Political Economy of British Guiana, 1838-1904* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), pp. 54-56, 110.

⁵David W. Galenson, "The Rise and Fall of Indentured Servitude in the Americas: An Economic Analysis," *Journal of Economic History* 44.1 (1984): 1-26.

Unlike the earlier European indentured servants who generally received only their maintenance, the indentured laborers of the nineteenth century received wages along with free housing and medical care, along with clothing and full rations in many cases. Nor were the new indentured laborers direct successors to the old. Indentured Europeans in the West Indies had largely been replaced by enslaved Africans during the second half of the seventeenth century and slaves also displaced most indentured servants in the Chesapeake Bay colonies during the eighteenth century. As Chapter 2 will describe in more detail, the new indentured migrants were first recruited as successors to the slaves freed in the British colonies in the 1830s. When French, Dutch, and Spanish colonies ended slavery, they too turned to indentured labor, as would the owners of plantations and mines in places that had never had slavery.

Some influential commentators have portrayed the new indentured labor not just as a successor to slavery but as a disguised continuation of that abolished institution. The British secretary of state for the colonies in 1840 expressed fears that the still modest Indian indentured labor trade might easily become “a new system of slavery,” while the viceroy of India, in urging its termination in 1915, charged that it had indeed become “a system of forced labour . . . differing but little from . . . slavery.” Several modern historical analyses also link indentured labor and slavery at least in some sectors of the trade, of which Hugh Tinker’s study of indentured Indian labor is the most influential.⁶

There are striking resemblances. Especially in the early years of the trade, many indentured laborers were recruited through kidnapping and coercion or were seriously misled by unscrupulous recruiters about their destinations, duties, and compensation – circumstances that gave rise to unflattering nicknames: “blackbirding” in the South Pacific, the “pig trade” in China, the “coolie trade” in India. Crowded conditions of transport and the high mortality rates in transit have also invited comparison

⁶Quotes from Hugh Tinker, *A New System of Slavery: The Export of Indian Labour Overseas, 1830–1920* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. vi, 339–40. See also Johnson U. J. Asiegbu, *Slavery and the Politics of Liberation, 1787–1861: A Study of Liberated African Emigration and British Anti-Slavery Policy* (London: Longmans, 1969), p. 119, who states that the African “emigration scheme degenerated into almost open slave trading after 1843.” With regard to the labor trade from East Africa to Réunion, François Renault, *Libération d’esclaves et nouvelle servitude: Les rachats de captifs africains pour le compte des colonies françaises après l’abolition de l’esclavage* (Abidjan: Nouvelles Editions Africaines, 1976), p. 71, concludes “le respect du volontariat chez l’engagé se réduisait, en règle générale, à une fiction administrative” [the voluntary aspect of the recruit was reduced, as a general rule, to an administrative fiction]. According to Monica Schuler, “The Recruitment of African Indentured Labourers for European Colonies in the Nineteenth Century,” in *Colonialism and Migration: Indentured Labour before and after Slavery*, ed. P. C. Emmer (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1986), pp. 125–27: “In practice, . . . African indentured labour recruitment cannot be distinguished from either the ‘legal’ or ‘illegal’ slave trade.”

with the slave trade. Finally, at their destinations indentured laborers performed tasks, lived in dwellings, and endured harsh disciplinary measures that in many cases were identical to those of the slaves they replaced – or very nearly so. In Cuban plantations, slaves and indentured Chinese even worked side by side. On Peruvian desert islands where Chinese mined guano deposits, conditions may have been worse than those associated with slavery.

Despite these similarities, most recent scholarship has questioned whether the indentured labor trade as a whole is best viewed as little more than a modified form of slavery. Researchers have argued that the worst circumstances applied to a distinct minority of indentured migrants, whereas most indentured laborers were recruited, transported, and employed under conditions that were quite distinct from the systems of New World slavery. Using more rigorous methods of comparison and relying less on emotive anecdotal evidence, economic and demographic historians have emphasized the voluntary nature of most indentured migration and the role of epidemiological factors rather than abuse in producing high mortality rates among some emigrant groups during transit and acclimatization to a new environment. For example, with regard to indentured Pacific islanders Ralph Shlomowitz reports, "During the past twenty years, . . . a revisionist interpretation has emerged: after an initial period . . . the labor trade came to be, in the main, a voluntary business arrangement, subject to government supervision, with the islanders being willing participants." More generally, Stanley Engerman argues, "It must be emphasized that the movement of contract labor differed from slavery," at least in being a voluntary bondage of limited duration. The view of indentured labor as "an extension of slavery . . . is not supported" by a recent volume of articles, according to its editors.⁷ Paralleling recent debates about systems of slavery, the critical issue is not deciding whether a system was "harsh" or "mild," but which conditions were exceptional and which typical. Another feature of the new historiography is its concern with relating indentured labor to the changing historical circumstances in capital markets, ideas, and technology that shaped the nineteenth century.

In evaluating these conflicting schools of interpretation, it is useful to bear in mind that during the nineteenth century the new indentured migrants were not alone in being described as laboring under a new form of slavery. The campaign to free black slaves in the West Indies had led to protests from industrial Europe's "white slaves," the disenfranchised la-

⁷Ralph Shlomowitz, "Epidemiology and the Pacific Labor Trade," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 19.4 (1989): 589; Stanley Engerman, "Contract Labor, Sugar, and Technology in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Economic History* 43 (1983): 645; E. van den Boogaart and P. C. Emmer, "Colonialism and Migration: An Overview," in Emmer, *Colonialism and Migration*, p. 11.

borers in the satanic mills. In 1838 the Workingmen's Association of Northampton denounced their "slavery to the rich" and "the shackles which held them in a state of bondage." The next year the liberal French Catholic Felicité de Lamennais wrote a volume on the working class called *Modern Slavery* (*De l'esclavage moderne*). The *Communist Manifesto* at midcentury argued that industrial workers were "slaves of the bourgeois class," as well as of the machine and the bourgeois state, and near the end of the century Pope Leo XIII's famous encyclical letter on the condition of the working class echoed the first of these judgments.⁸

While the charge that industrial workers were "slaves" was in part metaphorical and much influenced by the campaign rhetoric of the abolitionists, it is quite true that the "free" laboring person (like the bonded migrant) was under economic, political, and social constraints that were more than just the common human need to earn one's bread by the sweat of one's brow. The labor law of the period, though stopping short of the provisions of slave codes, could be harsh and unforgiving: workers were bound by contract to set pay and hours, absences and lateness were severely penalized, and discipline could be enforced by corporal punishment. Even after many reforms, "wage slavery" remained a popular metaphor. In short, it is important to see the new indentured labor in the context of its times.

Does the fact that both wage and indentured laborers in the nineteenth century were so frequently spoken of as "slaves" suggest they may have shared more in common than is generally acknowledged? Colin Newbury and others have pursued this approach with regard to the contemporaneous overseas migrations of "free" Europeans and "indentured" non-Europeans. There were differences as well as similarities, but, on the whole, indentured laborers seem to have had much more in common with the masses of Europeans who ventured overseas in this period than with the older European indentured servants or African slaves. In the first place, despite some exceptions, most indentured migrants left their homes voluntarily, just like most of the fifty million unindentured Europeans (a few convicts aside) who migrated overseas. Both were pushed to leave their families and friends by economic misery, discrimination, and famine at home and pulled to new locations overseas by hopes of better conditions and opportunities. Second, both resulted in permanent settlements as well as cyclical migrations. Newbury also points out that the distinction often drawn between the European "settler" and the non-European "sojourner"

⁸See R. J. M. Blackett, *Building an Antislavery Wall* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), pp. 23–25; Marcus Cunliffe, *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery: The Anglo-American Context, 1830–1860* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1979), pp. 10–12. Pope Leo wrote in *Rerum Novarum*, para. 6: "a very few rich and exceedingly rich men have laid a yoke almost of slavery on the unnumbered masses of non-owning workers."

or “laborer” is not justified. Despite the fact that indentured labor contracts usually guaranteed return passage, a great many indentured laborers settled permanently in their new homes after the expiration of their contracts, rather than return to their countries of origin. If the assumption of impermanence on the part of indentured laborers is exaggerated, new studies have shown the proportion of European migrants who returned to their countries of origin was often quite high.⁹

A third factor that free and indentured migrants had in common was the ships and maritime regulations of their transport overseas. The vessels carrying free and indentured migrants in the nineteenth century were much larger and faster than those that carried slaves and indentured migrants in the previous centuries. Such changes in shipping and in the scale of migration reflect the broader changes in the era’s economy, which encouraged overseas investment and commercial development of new areas of the world far distant from the high-growth industrial societies.

While sharing these common factors, the two groups of nineteenth-century migrants also differed in important ways. Europeans went overwhelmingly to other temperate areas where they were free from legal bondage, while indentured Asians, Africans, and Pacific islanders went to tropical areas where they faced long years of bondage to repay the debt of their transport. In part, as studies by David Galenson and W. Arthur Lewis have pointed out, nineteenth-century Europeans were willing to migrate only to destinations with wage rates higher than those prevailing in their own region (which were already high by global standards) and most faced only a brief passage to North America, while people from low-wage countries in other parts of the world had to accept the offers of more distant tropical areas that were willing to subsidize their voyages in return for indenture.¹⁰

However, political manipulation was also an essential part of the differentiating process. In the first place, significant numbers of impoverished Europeans received government-subsidized passages that had no restrictions attached. From 1840 to 1878 the Colonial Land and Emigration Board in Great Britain selected residents of the British Isles for free or assisted

⁹Colin Newbury, “Labour Migration in the Imperial Phase: An Essay in Interpretation,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 3.2 (1975): 235; Sucheng Chan, “European and Asian Immigration into the United States in Comparative Perspective, 1820s to 1920s,” in *Immigration Reconsidered: History, Sociology, and Politics*, ed. Virginia Yans-McLaughlin (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 38.

¹⁰Galenson, “Rise and Fall of Indentured Servitude,” pp. 16–26; W. Arthur Lewis, *The Development of the International Economic Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 14–20. Galenson calculates that the cost of a passage from East Asia to Hawaii, North America, or the West Indies was 3.5 to 10 times the per capita annual income in the region of origin, whereas the cost of a passage across the Atlantic was only half of the per capita annual income of European areas.

passage to colonies in Australia. Over 350,000 Europeans received passages assisted by the governments of Australia, New Zealand, southern Africa, and other British colonies. The governments of underpopulated lands such as Canada also subsidized passages for British citizens and other Europeans, including 200,000 Ukrainians. The provincial government of São Paulo, Brazil, similarly underwrote the recruitment of over 800,000 Europeans, mostly from Italy, in the decades before 1907. Overall about 10 percent of European migrants in the nineteenth century traveled under government subsidy, while another 25 percent had their passage funded by relatives and friends.¹¹

Governments chose to subsidize the cost of European migration, while requiring non-Europeans to repay their passage in indenture, for reasons that included unconcealed racial preferences and prejudices. For example, the governor of British Guiana justified imposing no indenture on Portuguese whose passage that colony's government paid while simultaneously imposing one on Indian and Chinese migrants on his belief that the Portuguese did not require to be compelled to work.¹² As will be detailed in Chapter 2, many countries and colonies also encouraged European settlement to "whiten" their populations under the guise of maintaining "civilized" standards. As Sidney Mintz has pointed out, a clear corollary of such white preference was the construction of "racist policies" to exclude non-European migrants from temperate areas where higher wages were inherently more attractive.¹³ Instances include the Asian exclusion laws in the United States and Canada and the restrictions on the entry and status of Indians and Chinese in southern Africa and of Chinese and Pacific islanders in Australia.

To summarize, comparing indentured laborers with other nineteenth-century migrants reveals both similarities and differences. In form the new indentured trade of the nineteenth century strongly resembled the Eu-

¹¹D. A. E. Harkness, "Irish Emigration," in *International Migrations*, vol. 2, *Interpretations*, ed. Walter F. Willcox (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1931), pp. 266, 276–77; Dudley Baines, *Emigration from Europe, 1815–1930* (London: Macmillan, 1991), pp. 50–52. Newbury, "Labour Migration," pp. 240–42; he terms (p. 255) indentured the 900 Europeans who signed one-year contracts in return for free passage to Queensland, Australia, in 1906–12.

¹²PP 1859 xvi [c.2452], Governor Wodehouse to H. Labouchere, 6 June 1857, p. 232. Brian L. Moore, "The Social Impact of Portuguese Immigration into British Guiana after Emancipation," *Boletín de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe* 19 (1975): 4–5, argues that since the 41,000 Portuguese, mostly from Madeira, introduced into the British West Indies at government expense between 1841 and 1881, were allowed to pay a monthly tax instead of being held to a contract: "In effect, [their] obligation to labour for a given period on the plantations was waived, or at least treated leniently, in contrast to other immigrants who were introduced at public expense."

¹³Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1985), p. 72.

ropean indentured labor trade of earlier centuries, but had no direct historical connection. Rather it was created to replace African slavery. That fact and the resemblances in their recruitment methods and labor conditions permit an interpretation of the new indentured labor as an extension of African slavery. But if indentured labor had one foot in slavery, it clearly had the other in the much larger voluntary overseas migrations of that era. As will be argued in more detail in the following chapters, indentured Asian, African, and Pacific island migrants had much in common with the even larger number of European migrants in their motives, conditions of travel, and subsequent creation of permanent overseas settlements. At the same time differences between the two migrant groups stemming from preexisting economic conditions and political manipulations meant that the initial labor experiences and destinations of indentured laborers set them apart from their European counterparts. Though a part of larger population movements, the indentured laborers of the nineteenth century also stand as a distinct group who deserve to be studied on their own.

Focus and scope of this study

There are many studies of indentured migrants from particular regions and into particular territories, but none that treats the labor of the nineteenth century as a whole. This study seeks to compare the different nineteenth-century indentured migrations and to relate their experiences to those of other contemporary migrant groups. Because, as the previous section of this study has shown, there are many areas of partial overlap between the experiences of indentured, enslaved, and free migrants, the first task is to delineate the limits of the study's central focus. In brief, it is concerned with labor migrations that were indentured, were intercontinental, and occurred during the period 1834–1922.

The first characteristic, *indenture*, serves to focus the study very largely on Asian, African, and Pacific islander migrants, since only a small number of Europeans migrated under indenture for reasons discussed earlier. Yet this is not a study of non-Western migration as a whole. This rubric also excludes the enormous numbers of internal labor migrants in these lands as well as the substantial numbers of Asians who ventured overseas free of any bond. The initial Chinese migrations to the Australian and Californian goldfields, for example, were of free migrants, as was most of the Indian migration to Ceylon (Sri Lanka). As Chapter 3 will make clear, these migrations were an important part of the context in which indentured labor operated, but also need to be clearly distinguished from the indentured migrations.

More difficult to classify are some Asian migrants who traveled on borrowed funds. Few would consider the need to repay money owed to

family and friends a significant limitation on a migrant's freedom. However, when the debt was owed to a stranger who had also arranged employment at the new destination, a situation quite common among some Chinese and Indians, the difference from a formal contract of indenture becomes tenuous. In the case of recruits from India to Southeast Asian plantations it was known as the *kangany* system in Malaya and the *maistry* system in Burma. A recruiter (kangany, maistry) hired by employers or employer organizations advanced money to each recruit for expenses and passage from India and arranged for a labor contract at destination out of which this debt was repaid in installments.¹⁴

Another example of formalized debt contract was the "credit ticket" system that had developed between China and parts of Southeast Asia in the nineteenth century. Chinese labor brokers in southern China advanced recruits money for their passages and expenses and upon their arrival in the Straits Settlements (Malaya) sold these "unpaid passengers" for \$20–24 to Chinese planters or foreign tin-miners.¹⁵ A similar system organized by private companies was used to recruit Japanese laborers for Peru (1899–1909), Hawaii (1894–1900), and Mexico (1901–7).¹⁶ Many Chinese came to North America (and Australia) under similar terms of debt bondage. According to Persia Campbell, "there is no doubt that the greater part of the Chinese emigration to California was financed or controlled by merchant brokers, acting independently or through the Trading Guilds," who advanced the Chinese the funds and retained control of the debt after their arrival. The Chinese repaid the debt in monthly installments including interest calculated at the rates equivalent to 50 to 100 percent a year. In Canada the brokers sold their lien to the employer who deducted it from wages, preventing the laborer from leaving his employ until the debt and accumulated interest charges were paid. It proved difficult for official investigators in both the United States and Canada to resolve whether

¹⁴Usha Mahajani, *The Role of Indian Minorities in Burma and Malaya* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973), p. 97; Michael Adas, *The Burma Delta: Economic Development and Social Change on an Asian Rice Frontier, 1852–1941* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974), pp. 91, 98–99. Recruiters were usually experienced Indian workers. Mahajani implies this led to "perpetual indebtedness of the laborer to his Kangany or Maistry"; Adas does not.

¹⁵Persia Crawford Campbell, *Chinese Coolie Emigration to Countries within the British Empire* (London: P. S. King & Son, 1923), pp. 1–6. She observes that half or more of the Chinese passengers to Malaya from the ports of Amoy, Hong Kong, and Swatow were under such credit ticket terms in 1876 but that by 1887 the number had declined to 27% of the Chinese arriving in Singapore and by 1890 to 8.4%, the rest being free of such debt to agents (though, of course, they may have owed friends and relatives).

¹⁶Toraje Irie, "History of Japanese Migration to Peru," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 31.3–4 (1951): 443; Dorothy Ochiai Hazama and Jane Okamoto Komeiji, *Okage Sama De: The Japanese in Hawaii, 1885–1985* (Honolulu: Bess Press, 1986), p. 25; Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei: The World of the First Generation Japanese Immigrants, 1885–1924* (New York: Free Press, 1988), p. 69.